Data may have been updated since publication. For the most current information, see www.ers.usda.gov/publications/agoutlook/aotables/.

Farm, Rural, and Natural Resources Indicators

	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Annual percent change 1990-2000	2002-03	2003-04
Cash receipts ($ billion)	169.5	192.1	200.1	195.1	211.6	233.4 f	1.3	8.5	10.3
Crops	80.3	92.5	93.4	101.3	106.2	111.9 f	1.4	4.8	5.4
Livestock	89.2	99.6	106.7	93.8	105.5	121.5 f	1.1	12.5	15.2
Direct government payments ($ billion)	9.3	22.9	20.7	11.0	15.9	15.7 f	9.4	44.5	-1.3
Gross cash income ($ billion)	186.9	228.7	235.6	222.0	243.9	266.3 f	2.0	9.9	9.2
Net cash income ($ billion)	52.7	56.7	59.5	50.7	68.6	77.5 f	0.7	35.3	13.0
Net value added ($ billion)	80.8	91.9	94.1	78.8	101.4	118.9 f	1.3	28.7	17.3
Farm equity ($ billion)	702.6	1,025.6	1,070.2	1,110.7	1,180.8	1,224.9 f	3.9	6.3	3.7
Farm debt-asset ratio	16.4	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.4	14.3 f	-1.0	-2.7	-0.7
Farm household income ($/farm household)	38,237	61,947	64,117	65,757	68,506 f	70,675 f	4.9	4.2	3.2
Farm household income relative to average U.S. household income (%)	103.1	108.6	110.2	113.7	na	na	0.5	na	na
Nonmetro-Metro difference in poverty rate (%)	3.6	2.6	3.1	2.6	2.1	na	-3.2	-19.2	na
Cropland harvested (million acres)	310	314	311	307	314 p	na	0.1	2.3	na
USDA conservation program expenditures ($ bil.)[1]	3.0	3.4	3.7	3.5 q	na	na	1.3	na	na

Food and Fiber Sector Indicators

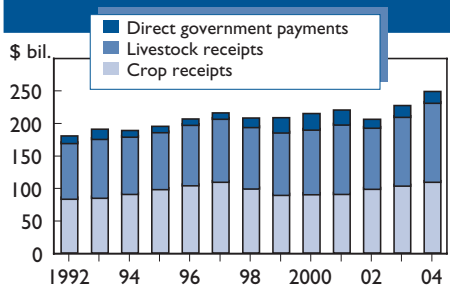
U.S. gross domestic product ($ billion current)[2]	5,803	9,825	10,082	10,446	10,863 f	na	5.4	4.0	na
Food and fiber share (%)	15.1	12.6	12.3	na	na	na	-1.8	na	na
Farm sector share (%)	1.4	0.8	0.8	0.8	na	na	-5.4	na	na
Total agricultural imports ($ billion)[1]	22.7	38.9	39.0	41.0	45.7	52.7	5.5	11.5	15.3
Total agricultural exports ($ billion)[1]	40.3	50.7	52.7	53.3	56.2	62.3	2.3	5.4	10.9
Export share of the volume of U.S. agricultural production (%)	27.1	22.8	22.9	22.5	21.1 p	na	-1.7	-6.2	na
CPI for food (1982-84=100)	132.4	167.9	173.1	176.2	180.0	186.3 f	2.4	2.2	3.5
Share of U.S. disposable income spent on food (%)	11.2	10.1	10.2	10.1	10.1	na	-1.0	0.0	na
Share of total food expenditures for at-home consumption (%)	55.4	53.3	53.9	53.8	53.1	na	-0.4	-1.3	na
Farm-to-retail price spread (1982-84=100)	144.5	210.3	215.4	221.2	na	na	3.8	na	na
Total USDA food and nutrition assistance spending ($ billion)[1]	24.9	32.6	34.2	38.0	41.8	46.0	2.7	10.0	10.0

f = Forecast. p = Preliminary. q = 2002 Administration request. na = Not available.

[1] Based on October-September fiscal years ending with year indicated.

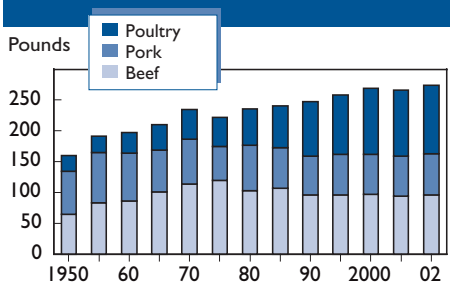
[2] Forecast for 2003 based on the Office of Management and Budget's Midsession Budget Review, July 2003.

Revenue from farm commodities, 1992-2004

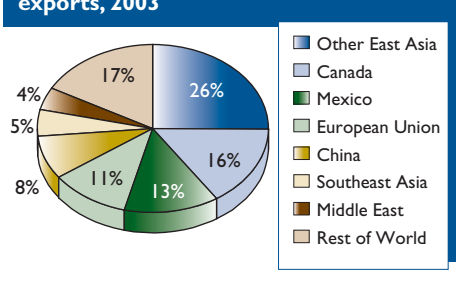


2004 forecast.

U.S. per capita meat consumption, 1950-2002



Major destinations of U.S. agricultural exports, 2003



For more information, see www.ers.usda.gov/amberwaves/

Behind the Data

Measuring America's Cheese Consumption

Cheese consumption has grown in the last 50 years from a relatively minor food to a staple, with Americans averaging almost a serving per day. In the 1950s, specialty cheeses were not widely available, and Cheddar or process American cheeses were eaten plain or incorporated into a limited number of dishes. The longrun growth in cheese consumption has been driven by more cheeses being used in more dishes in more places.

Consumption of cheese, as with most storable dairy products, is estimated by relatively simple disappearance calculations. Total supply is defined as production plus beginning stocks and imports. After ending stocks, exports, and shipments to U.S. Territories are subtracted, the remainder is considered consumption. Production is estimated by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) from a survey of dairy plants. Stocks estimates are from NASS's survey of cold-storage warehouses, augmented by information from USDA's Farm Service Agency. International trade data come from the Bureau of Census and USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

Disappearance estimates for cheese generally involve fewer interpretation problems than for many foods. Once manufactured, cheese undergoes little further processing. Combined with its traditionally high cost, this straightforward marketing flow leads to relatively minor wastage between manufacturing and the final user. For example, considerable cheese is trimmed off when rectangular blocks are cut into specialty shapes such as "longhorns." But this trim is used in process cheese products.

Information for a full supply and utilization calculation is not available for most individual cheeses. However, estimates are still made if the missing information is thought to have relatively little effect. For example, stocks of Muenster are included in the reported "other natural cheese" category. However, separate data on stocks would only rarely influence consumption estimates because Muenster is stored only briefly, and changes in stocks would be dwarfed by other factors.

Cheese data record the weight of natural cheese used and whether that cheese was sold directly to consumers or used in process cheese products. The actual weight of all cheese and cheese products is larger than total cheese consumption because process cheese products include additional moisture and (possibly) other ingredients.

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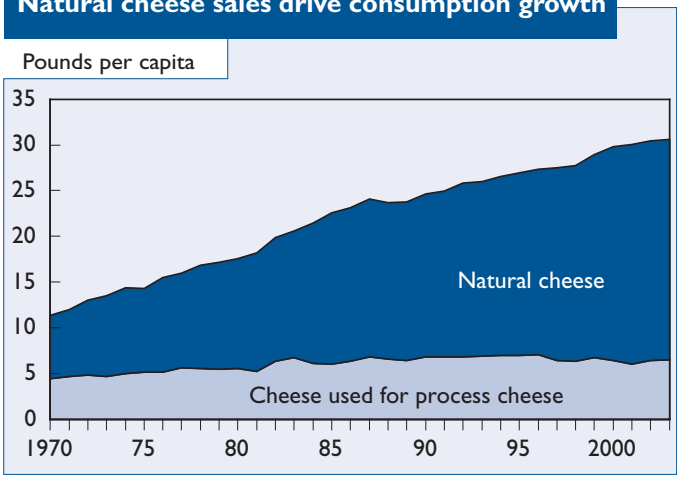
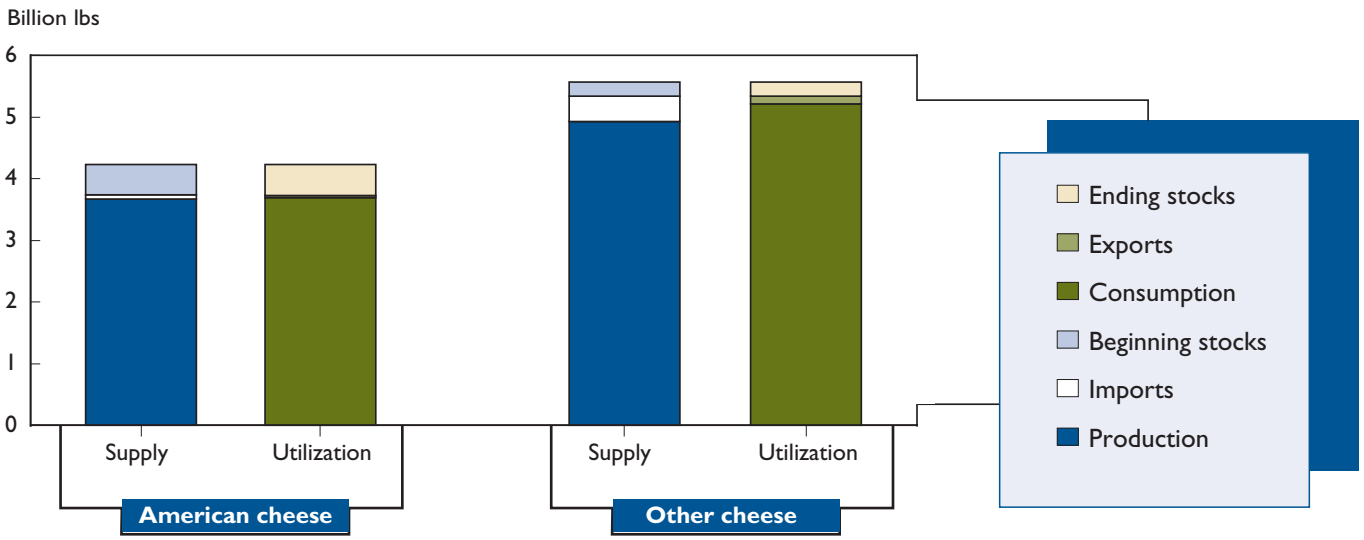
Natural cheese sales drive consumption growth

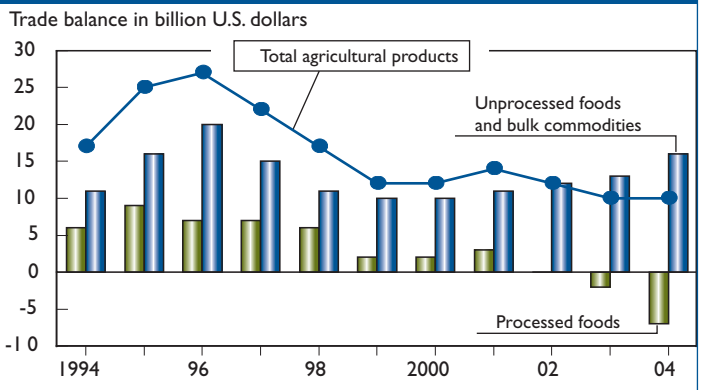


Cheese supply and utilization, 2003



Markets and Trade

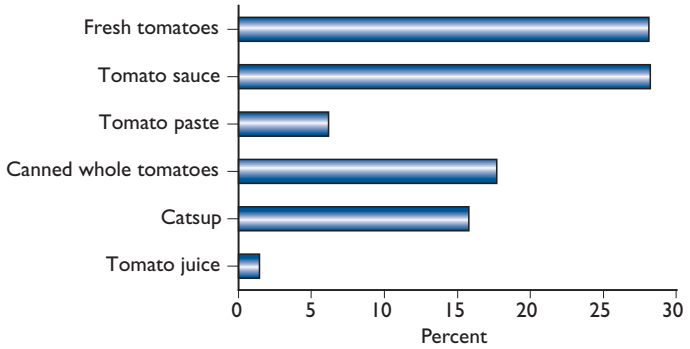
Growing trade deficit in processed foods reduces surplus in total U.S. agricultural trade



Source: ERS, Foreign Agricultural Trade of the United States.

Diet and Health

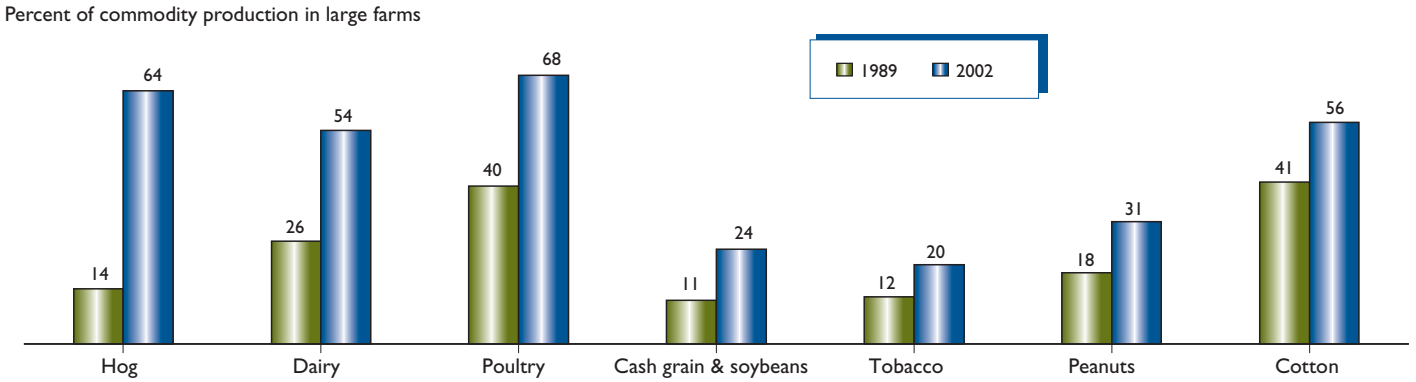
Close to 30 percent of U.S. consumers reported eating fresh tomatoes on any given day, and equal numbers consumed tomato sauce



Source: ERS analysis of USDA's 1994-96 Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals.

Farms, Firms, and Households

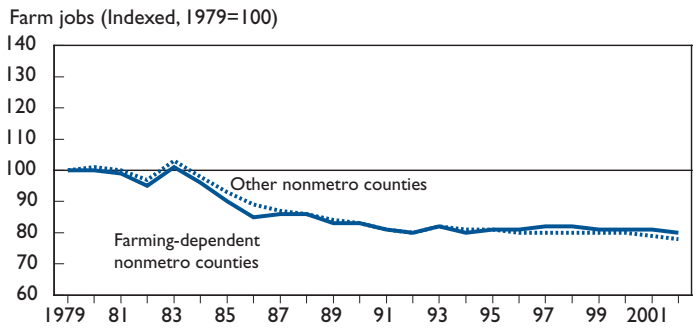
Commodity production shifts to large farms, with sales of at least $500,000



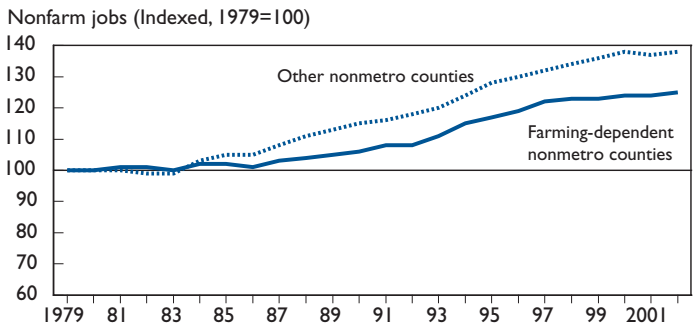
Source: USDA, 1989 Farm Costs and Returns Survey and 2002 Agricultural Resource Management Survey.

Rural America

Since 1979, farming-dependent rural counties have experienced the same drop in farm jobs as other rural counties ...



...but they have not kept up with other counties in the growth of nonfarm jobs



Note: Farming-dependent counties are defined by ERS as obtaining 15 percent or more of total earnings from farming during 1998-2000 or having 15 percent or more of employed residents working in farm occupations in 2000.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

On the Map

Nutrition Education Funding for Food Stamp Participants Rises Sharply

Between 1992 and 2003, annual Federal spending for nutrition-related classes, healthy recipes, shopping tips, and other education efforts for food stamp recipients increased from $666,000 to just over $190 million. This dramatic growth echoes increasing public recognition of the many benefits of healthy eating behaviors and active lifestyles. USDA reimburses States for 50 percent of allowable food stamp nutrition education expenditures. Nutrition education spending per food stamp participant varies widely across States. In 2003, three States spent over $30 per food stamp participant, while six States spent less than $2. The national average was about $9 per participant.

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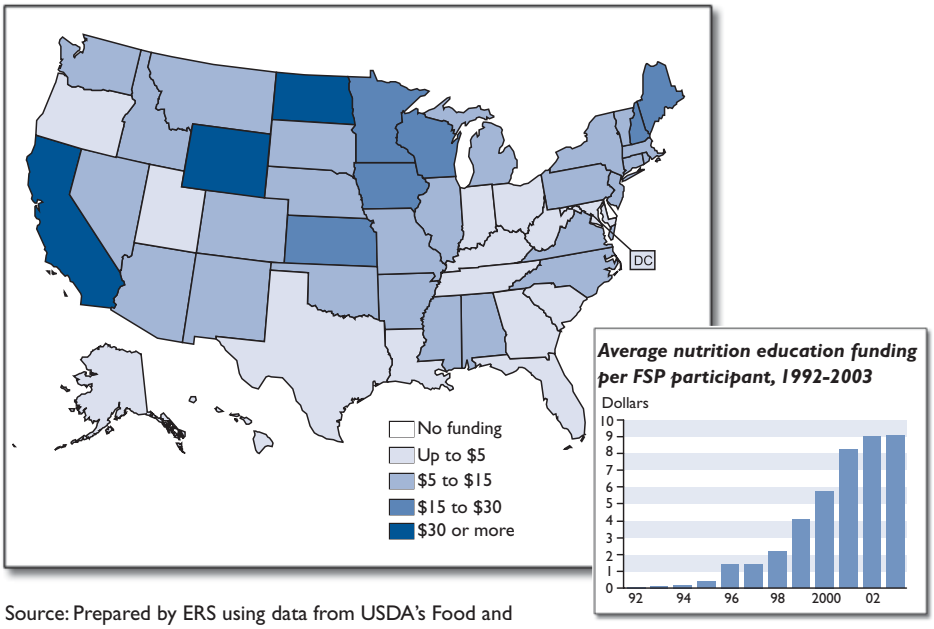
USDA nutrition education funding per Food Stamp Program (FSP) participant, 2003



Source: Prepared by ERS using data from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service.

In the Long Run

USDA Food Assistance Expenditures Rising

Expenditures for USDA's food assistance programs have grown from $1.6 billion in fiscal year 1970 to a record $46 billion in fiscal 2004. Most of this increase is due to the Food Stamp Program, which has accounted for an annual average of 60 percent of total food assistance expenditures during this time period. While expenditures for WIC and the school meals programs have trended upward over time, expenditures for the Food Stamp Program have fluctuated more widely. Historically, participation in the Food Stamp Program has risen during recessionary periods and fallen during periods of economic growth.

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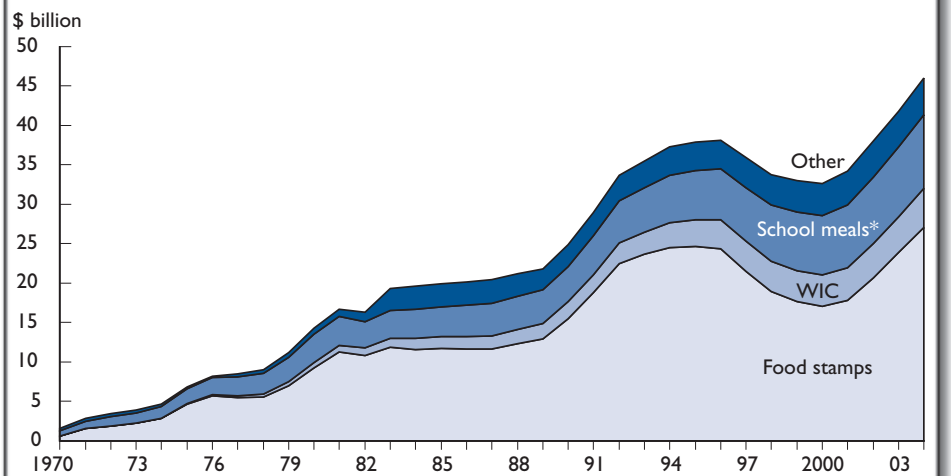
USDA food assistance expenditures rising: Fiscal years 1970-2004



*School meals includes the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, and the Special Milk Program.

Source: Prepared by ERS using data from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service.